NON-TECHNICAL ABSTRACT

It is becoming increasingly clear that the transformation of normal cells into malignancies may occur as a result of abnormal genetic events. Over-expression of certain genes may actually trigger development of a tumor. One of these genes, named erbB-2, has been associated with a poor prognosis in breast and ovarian cancer. We have developed a novel therapy which targets the erbB-2 gene product. We plan to study this novel therapy in patients with recurrent ovarian and extraovarian cancer. These cancers are deadly diseases and there are currently no curative treatments available. We intend to administer to these patients an adenovirus that contains a gene which will create an antibody to the erbB-2 protein product within the cancer cells. A single dose of this novel agent will be administered within the abdominal cavity of patients who participate in the study. The major objectives of the study are to determine how much of the anti-erbB-2 antibody gene can be safely administered and what are the expected side effects. In addition, we will determine if this novel compound actually inhibits the erbB-2 gene function. Although not a major endpoint to this study, we will also determine if the anti-erbB-2 antibody gene will cause tumor regression.